WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   An image processing apparatus comprising:

input means for inputting image data having a hierarchical structure;

5   determination means for determining if the image data is a specific image; and

output means for selecting and outputting a layer to be output of the image data on the basis of a determination result of said determination means.

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2.   The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the image data complies with a hierarchical data format that hierarchically stores image data of a plurality of resolutions.

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3.   The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said output means selects image data in a lowest resolution layer when said determination means determines that the image data is the specific image.

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4.   The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said output means enlarges the image data in the lowest resolution layer to a size of image data in a highest resolution layer, and outputs the enlarged data.

5.   The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said
determination means determines the specific image when
the image data has a copyright.

5   6.   An image processing apparatus comprising:
        input means for inputting image data;
        determination means for determining if the image
data is a specific image;
        output permission detection means for obtaining
10 output permission information of the image data; and
        image processing means for executing an image
process that improves image quality of the image data
in accordance with a determination result of said
determination means and the output permission
15 information.

7.   The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said
determination means determines the specific image when
the image data has a copyright.
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8.   The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein noise
is superposed on the image data, and
        said image processing means removes noise from
the image data.
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9.   The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said image processing means comprises:

holding means for holding predetermined data; and

conversion means for converting the image data on the basis of the predetermined data.

10.   The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the predetermined data is a predetermined filter coefficient, and

said conversion means executes a filter process of the image data on the basis of the filter coefficient.

11.   The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the image data complies with a hierarchical data format that hierarchically stores image data of a plurality of resolutions.

12.   The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said input means inputs image data transferred from an external apparatus.

13.   The apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising image forming means for forming an image on the basis of the image data that has undergone the image process by said image processing means.

14. An image processing apparatus comprising:

input means for inputting image data having a hierarchical structure;

5   determination means for determining if the image data is a specific image; and

noise addition means for adding noise to the image data on the basis of a determination result of said determination means.

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15. The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said determination means determines the specific image when the image data has a copyright, and

said noise addition means adds noise when said

15 determination means determines that the image data is the specific image.

16. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said noise addition means averages pixel values in units of

20 predetermined unit blocks in the image data.

17. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said noise addition means removes high-frequency components of the image data.

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18. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said noise addition means adds predetermined fixed data to the image data.

5   19. An image processing apparatus comprising:

input means for inputting image data having a hierarchical structure;

determination means for determining if the image data is a specific image; and

10   pseudo halftone means for executing a pseudo halftone process of the image data on the basis of a determination result of said determination means.

20. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said
15   pseudo halftone means allows pseudo halftone processes using a plurality of types of grayscale patterns, and executes a pseudo halftone process for a small number of gray levels for the image data when said determination determines that the image data is the
20   specific image.

21. The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said pseudo halftone means executes a pseudo halftone process for a smallest number of gray levels for the
25   image data when said determination determines that the image data is the specific image.

22. The apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising holding means for holding parameters of the pseudo halftone process for a plurality of grayscale patterns, and

wherein said pseudo halftone means selects the parameter in accordance with the determination result.

23. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said pseudo halftone means executes a dither conversion process for the image data.

24. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said pseudo halftone means executes an error diffusion process for the image data.

25. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said determination means determines the specific image when the image data has a copyright.

26. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the image data complies with a hierarchical data format that hierarchically stores image data of a plurality of resolutions.

27.   The apparatus according to claim 19, further comprising color conversion means for converting the image data into a plurality of color component data, and

    wherein said pseudo halftone means executes pseudo halftone processes based on the determination result in units of color component data.

28.   The apparatus according to claim 27, further comprising holding means for holding a plurality of types of color conversion parameters, and

    wherein said color conversion means selects the color conversion parameter in accordance with the determination result.

29.   The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said input means inputs image data transferred from an external apparatus.

30.   The apparatus according to claim 19, further comprising image forming means for forming an image on the basis of image data that has undergone the pseudo halftone process.

31.   An image processing apparatus comprising:

input means for inputting image data having a hierarchical structure;

determination means for determining if the image data is a specific image; and

5   color conversion means for executing a color conversion process for the image data on the basis of a determination result of said determination means.

32.   The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein said
10 color conversion means converts the image data into monochrome data when said determination means determines that the image data is the specific image.

33.   The apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said
15 color conversion means converts the grayscale pattern of the image data when said determination means determines that the image data is the specific image.

34.   The apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said
20 color conversion means extracts one of a plurality of color component data that form the image data when said determination means determines that the image data is the specific image.

25 35.   The apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said color conversion means converts the image data into

data having an output color format consisting of a plurality of color components for output when said determination means determines that the image data is not the specific image.

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36.   The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein said color conversion means converts the image data into one of a plurality of color component data that form the output color format when said determination means

10   determines that the image data is the specific image.

37.   The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein said color conversion means replaces the image data by predetermined data when said determination means

15   determines that the image data is the specific image.

38.   The apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said color conversion means replaces the image data by inverted data thereof when said determination means

20   determines that the image data is the specific image.

39.   The apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said color conversion means inverts the image data when said determination means determines that the image data is

25   the specific image.

40.   The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein said
determination means determines the specific image when
the image data has a copyright.

5   41.   The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein the
image data complies with a hierarchical data format
that hierarchically stores image data of a plurality of
resolutions.

10   42.   An image processing method comprising:
        the input step of inputting image data having a
hierarchical structure;
        the determination step of determining if the
image data is a specific image; and
15   the output step of selecting and outputting a
layer to be output of the image data on the basis of
the determination result.

43.   An image processing method comprising:
20   the input step of inputting image data;
        the determination step of determining if the
image data is a specific image;
        the output permission detection step of obtaining
output permission information of the image data; and
25   the image processing step of executing an image
process that improves image quality of the image data

in accordance with the determination result and the
output permission information.

44.   An image processing method comprising:
       the input step of inputting image data having a
hierarchical structure;
       the determination step of determining if the
image data is a specific image; and
       the noise addition step of adding noise to the
image data on the basis of the determination result.

45.   An image processing method comprising:
       the input step of inputting image data having a
hierarchical structure;
       the determination step of determining if the
image data is a specific image; and
       the pseudo halftone step of executing a pseudo
halftone process of the image data on the basis of the
determination result.

46.   An image processing method comprising:
       the input step of inputting image data having a
hierarchical structure;
       the determination step of determining if the
image data is a specific image; and

the color conversion step of executing a color
conversion process for the image data on the basis of a
determination result.

5   47.   A storage medium that stores a program of an
image process, said program having at least:
a code of the input step of inputting image data
having a hierarchical structure;
a code of the determination step of determining
10   if the image data is a specific image; and
a code of the output step of selecting and
outputting a layer to be output of the image data on
the basis of the determination result.

15   48.   A storage medium that stores a program of an
image process, said program having at least:
a code of the input step of inputting image data;
a code of the determination step of determining
if the image data is a specific image;
20   a code of the output permission detection step of
obtaining output permission information of the image
data; and
a code of the image processing step of executing
an image process that improves image quality of the
25   image data in accordance with the determination result
and the output permission information.

49.   A storage medium that stores a program of an
image process, said program having at least:
       a code of the input step of inputting image data
5   having a hierarchical structure;
       a code of the determination step of determining
if the image data is a specific image; and
       a code of the noise addition step of adding noise
to the image data on the basis of the determination
10   result.

50.   A storage medium that stores a program of an
image process, said program having at least:
       a code of the input step of inputting image data
15   having a hierarchical structure;
       a code of the determination step of determining
if the image data is a specific image; and
       a code of the pseudo halftone step of executing a
pseudo halftone process of the image data on the basis
20   of the determination result.

51.   A storage medium that stores a program of an
image process, said program having at least:
       a code of the input step of inputting image data
25   having a hierarchical structure;

a code of the determination step of determining
if the image data is a specific image; and

a code of the color conversion step of executing
a color conversion process for the image data on the
5   basis of a determination result.